

Examiner's Amendment/Comment

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 5/4/2010 has been entered.

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with John LaBatt (48,301) on 6/17/2010.

3. The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 29, line 21: Delete "each of".

Claim 29, line 23: Replace "any" with -- every --.

Claim 54, line 21: Delete "each of".

Claim 54, line 22: Replace "any" with -- every --.

Claim 55, line 22: Delete "each of".

Claim 55, line 23: Replace "any" with -- every --.

Claim 60, line 20: Delete "each of".

Claim 60, line 20: Replace "any" with -- every --.

Claim 61, line 21: Delete "each of".

Claim 61, line 22: Replace "any" with -- every --.

Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

4. Claims 29-34, 36-38, 40-52, 54, 55 and 57-61 as amended above, are allowed.

5. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The prior art fails to teach a device comprising: 1) a sensor comprising a plurality of switching states, 2) a plurality of different colored lighting devices having light elements for transmitting sensor information, 3) a transparent casing subdivided in an azimuth direction around an axis of the casing part by optical interfaces which prevent cross-talk between the plurality of lighting elements, and 4) light emitted by the lighting devices is visible to a user from every azimuth direction in a polar angle range between at least 20 degrees and 160 degrees as specifically called for in the claimed combinations of the independent claims 29, 54, 55, 60 and 61.

6. The closest prior art WO 2003/058659 (Hurrle) teaches a device with a plurality of switching states, the information regarding the switching states relayed by a plurality of light devices/units [33 and 35] of different colors and disposed in a transparent casing part subdivided in an azimuth direction around an axis such that cross-talk between the light devices is avoided. Hurrle fails, at least, to teach light emitted from the light devices is visible by a user of the device from every azimuth direction in a polar angle range of between 20 and 160 degrees [panel 3 of Hurrle prevents the user from viewing emitted light between 0 and 90 degrees in the polar angle range]. It would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the device of Hurrle in order to achieve the claimed invention without the applicant's own work.

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Gamerone (US 4,984,142) teaches an optical indicator.

Shiki (US 3,639,745) teaches a mounting arrangement for a switch having an optical indicator.

Fiorenzo et al (US 3,743,828) teaches a lamp of variable light intensity and color visible from all azimuthal angles across a wide range of polar angles [see figure 3].

8. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to DAVID R. CROWE whose telephone number is (571)272-9088. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00AM-5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jong-Suk (James) Lee can be reached on 571-272-7044. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

DRC
6/21/2010

/Jong-Suk (James) Lee/
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Art Unit 2885